

June 25, 2006 Liaison Communication

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### **Liaison Workshops Saw Great Turnout**

Thank you to all state agency ethics liaison officers, compliance officers, and other interested individuals who turned out in impressive numbers (particularly on a storm-drenched Wednesday morning!) for the Office of State Ethics' training seminars. It was a pleasure to meet so many of you in person, and we hope that we provided you with valuable and substantive information and resources to assist you in your positions.

For those who missed the session or who would like to view it again, the June 6 workshop was taped by CT-N and is available in its entirety at the following link:  
<http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/ondemand.asp?ID=2052>.

### **New Advisory Opinions**

On June 15, 2006, the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board met and decided on two advisory opinions, summarized below. Click on the AO numbers to read the full text of the opinions.

#### [2006-4](#)

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board concluded that, for purposes of the gift ban in General Statutes § 1-84 (m), if a professional organization's membership is a collection of persons doing business with or seeking to do business with the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the organization's funding stems mainly from those persons, the organization is considered to be doing business with or seeking to do business with DPW. In other words, the organization is considered a regulated donor and, as such, may not give "gifts," as defined in § 1-79 (e) to DPW employees and officials.

#### [2006-5](#)

General Statutes § 1-84 (k) prohibits state employees and public officials from accepting fees and honoraria for activities conducted in one's official capacity. In this opinion, the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board interprets the phrase, "official capacity," to mean that the public official's or state employee's official position or authority was a significant factor in a decision to extend an invitation for an article, appearance, speech or event participation by such employee or official. The Board also concluded that a union contract that sanctions acceptance of honoraria for activities

conducted in one's official capacity does not supersede the Code of Ethics, as there is no exception to § 1-84 (k).

**New Necessary Expenses Form**

As noted in last month's electronic communication, we have redesigned the ETH-NE form, which is to be filed with the OSE within 30 days of receiving pre-payment or reimbursement for necessary expenses for out-of-state travel. The new form is available on our Web site, on the [Forms](#) page.

By popular demand, a handout detailing rules regarding necessary expenses and gifts to the state is attached to this message. Feel free to print, copy and distribute this handout as you feel appropriate.

**Agency Ethics Policies**

Please remember to turn in your agency's own ethics policy for our records. These policies can be mailed to the OSE at 18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106; faxed to 860-566-3806; or e-mailed to [Meredith.Trimble@ct.gov](mailto:Meredith.Trimble@ct.gov).

As always, we seek to find and utilize innovative and substantive ways to assist you in your roles as agency ethics liaison officers or ethics compliance officers. Your input is always welcome as we continue in our dialogue.

Sincerely,

Meredith Trimble  
Director of Education  
Office of State Ethics